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The Sensational SPIDER-MAN®

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MR. PARKER

ROBERTO AGUIRRE-SACASA • CLAYTON CRAIN

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MY SCIENCE TEACHER IS SPIDER-MAN!!

THE DAY IT HAPPENS--THE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGES--JORDAN HARRISON WAKES UP AT 5:45 A.M.

HE'D BEEN DREAMING ABOUT MADELINE DANIELS. (SHE'S HIS LAB PARTNER IN BIOLOGY.)

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MADELINE'S A TOTAL HOTTIE. SHE HAS NO IDEA JORDAN'S BEEN IN LOVE WITH HER SINCE FRESHMAN YEAR.

THE HARRISONS, MOTHER AND SON, LIVE ON THE LOWER EAST SIDE, BY THE WAY.

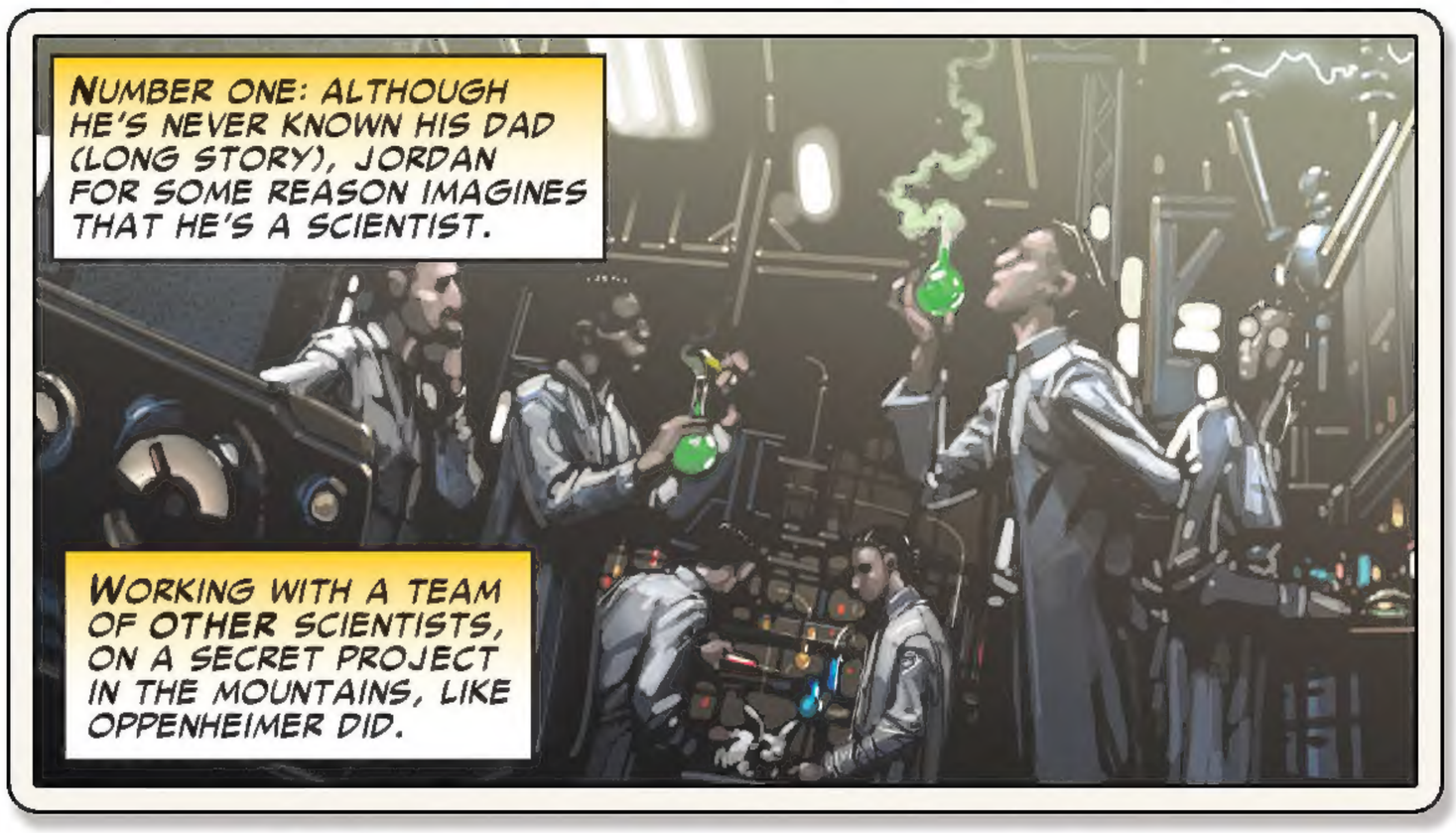
IN A FIFTH-FLOOR WALK-UP ABOVE A CHINESE FOOD RESTAURANT. (JORDAN HAS GENERAL TSO'S CHICKEN FOR DINNER MAYBE... FOUR NIGHTS A WEEK.)

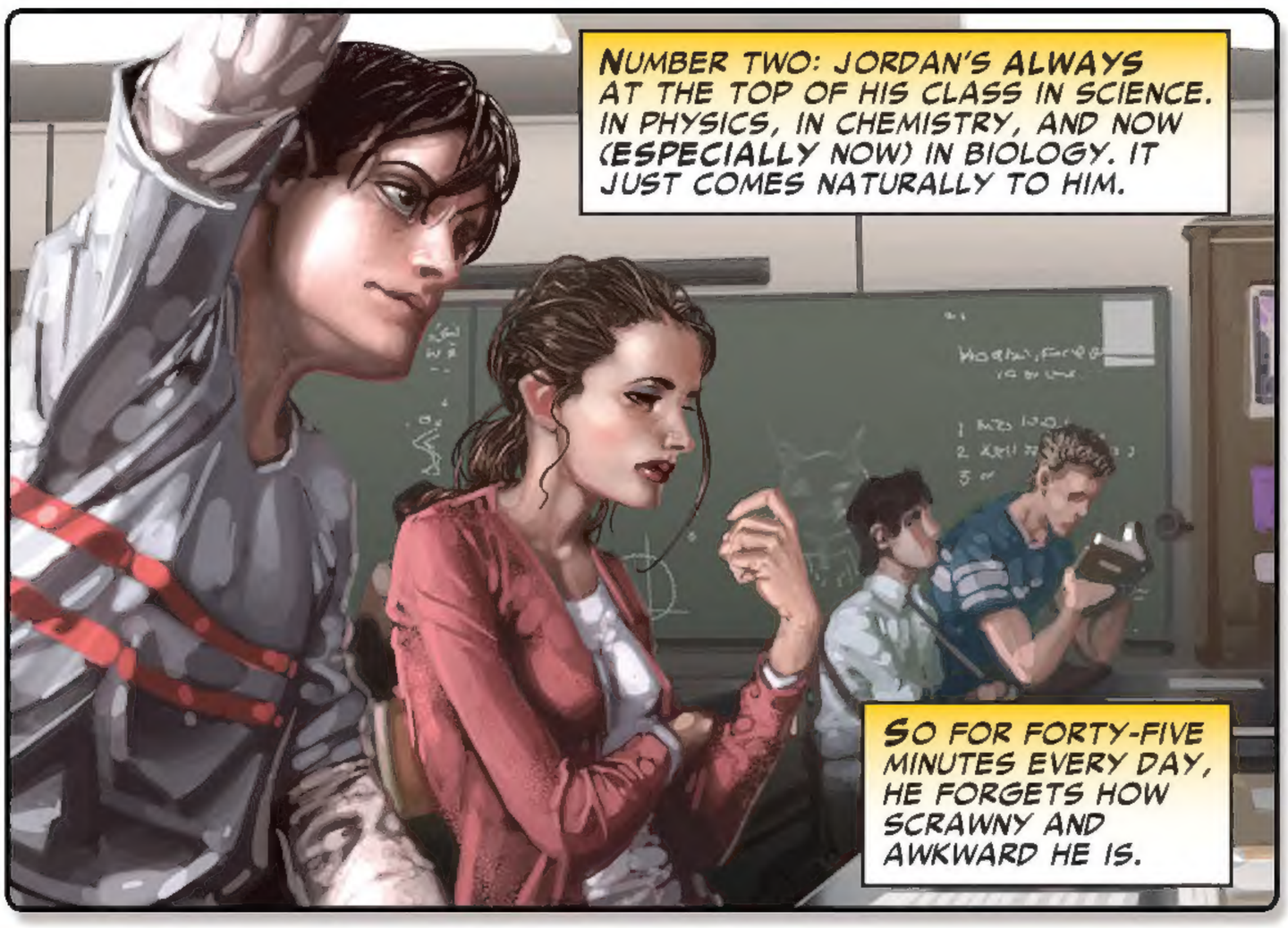
WHY 5:45? WHY THIS MORNING?

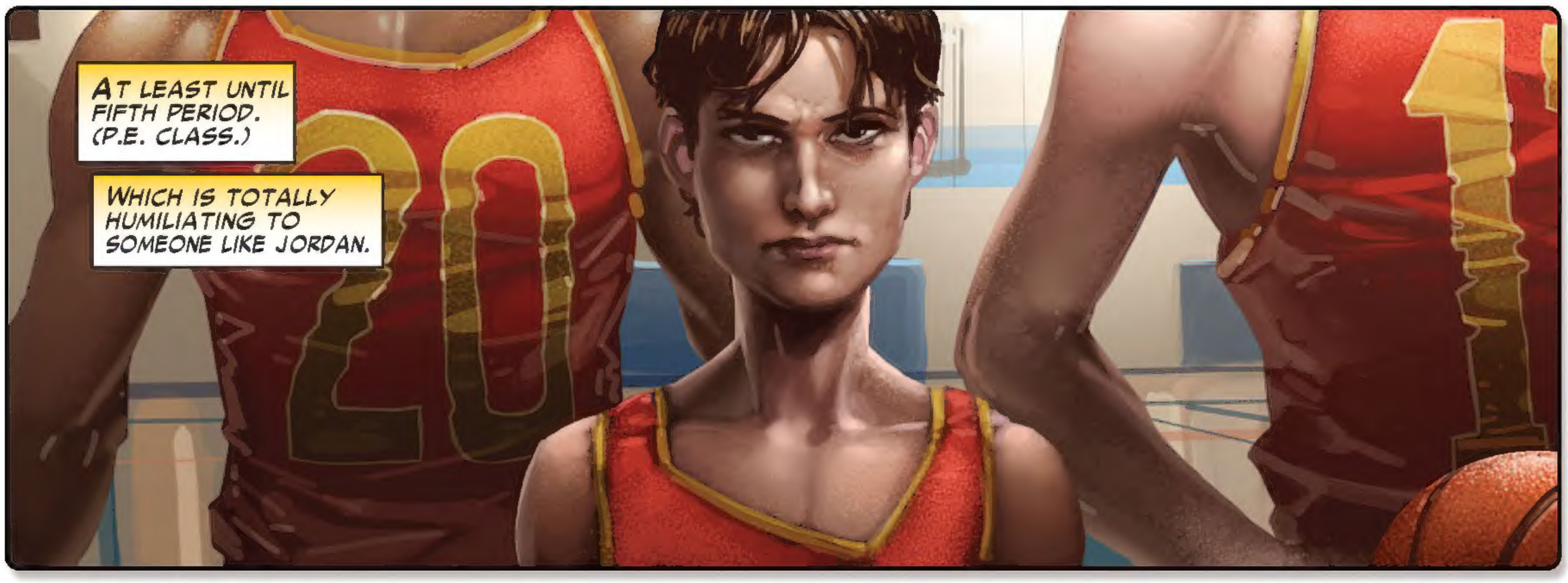
TO STUDY. LIKE HE DOES **EVERY** MORNING DURING THE WEEK. (SATURDAYS, HE SLEEPS UNTIL 8; SUNDAYS, UNTIL 9.)

JORDAN'S A DECENT STUDENT. HE GETS MOSTLY Bs AND Cs, NO Ds, AND ONE A.
IN BIOLOGY.
DESPITE MADELINE DANIELS AND HER SWEATERS.

FOR A LOT OF REASONS, SCIENCE--IN ALL ITS PERMUTATIONS--HAS ALWAYS BEEN JORDAN'S FAVORITE SUBJECT.


NUMBER ONE: ALTHOUGH HE'S NEVER KNOWN HIS DAD (LONG STORY), JORDAN FOR SOME REASON IMAGINES THAT HE'S A SCIENTIST.
WORKING WITH A TEAM OF OTHER SCIENTISTS, ON A SECRET PROJECT IN THE MOUNTAINS, LIKE OPPENHEIMER DID.


NUMBER TWO: JORDAN'S ALWAYS AT THE TOP OF HIS CLASS IN SCIENCE. IN PHYSICS, IN CHEMISTRY, AND NOW (ESPECIALLY NOW) IN BIOLOGY. IT JUST COMES NATURALLY TO HIM.
SO FOR FORTY-FIVE MINUTES EVERY DAY, HE FORGETS HOW SCRAWNY AND AWKWARD HE IS.


AT LEAST UNTIL FIFTH PERIOD. (P.E. CLASS.)
WHICH IS TOTALLY HUMILIATING TO SOMEONE LIKE JORDAN.

NUMBER THREE: JORDAN'S ALWAYS CONNECTED WITH HIS SCIENCE TEACHERS. ESPECIALLY HIS CURRENT ONE. A YOUNG GUY NOT **COMPLETELY** UNLIKE HIM NAMED:

PETER PARKER

--PETER PARKER, BUT YOU CAN CALL ME *MR.* PARKER.

NORMALLY I JUST TEACH CHEMISTRY, BUT THIS YEAR, BECAUSE OF CUTBACKS, I'M TEACHING *ONE* SECTION OF BIOLOGY...

"...YOU LUCKY FOLKS."

JORDAN...?

...KIDDO, YOU HAVEN'T BEEN UP ALL NIGHT, HAVE YOU?

(THIS IS JORDAN'S MOM. SHE'S A PARALEGAL AT THE FIRM OF MURDOCK AND NELSON. AND A WORRIER.)

NO, MOM, JUST A LITTLE WHILE. AND IN THE FUTURE, COULD YOU PLEASE-- YOU KNOW-- KNOCK?

...

IN THE *FUTURE*, I WILL. AND COULD YOU PLEASE--YOU KNOW--GET DRESSED AND JOIN ME FOR BREAKFAST? YOU'RE NOT LEAVING WITHOUT EATING AGAIN, KIDDO.

FINE, FINE. LEMME JUST FINISH OUTLINING THIS CHAPTER, OKAY?

...

WHAT'S IT ABOUT?

The Sensational Spider-Man (ISSN #1558-6081) No. 28, September, 2006. Published Monthly except semi-monthly in January, February and March by MARVEL PUBLISHING, INC., a subsidiary of MARVEL ENTERTAINMENT, INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: 417 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016. APPLICATION TO MAIL PERIODICAL POSTAGE RATES IS PENDING AT NEW YORK, NY AND AT ADDITIONAL MAILING OFFICES. © 2006 Marvel Characters, Inc. All rights reserved. All characters featured in this issue and the distinctive names and likenesses thereof, and all related indicia are trademarks of Marvel Characters, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons, and/or institutions in this magazine with those of any living or dead person or institution is intended, and any such similarity which may exist is purely coincidental. $2.99 per copy in the U.S. and $4.25 in Canada (GST #R127032852) in the direct market and $2.99 per copy in the U.S. and $4.25 in Canada (GST #R127032852) through the newsstand; Canadian Agreement #40668537. Printed in the USA. Subscription rate (U.S. dollars) for 12 issues: U.S. $27.00; Canada $37.00; Foreign $39.00. POSTMASTER: SEND ALL ADDRESS CHANGES TO The Sensational Spider-Man, C/O MARVEL SUBSCRIPTION DEPT. P.O. BOX 30520 SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84130-0520. TELEPHONE # (800) 217-9158. FAX # (801) 208-0877. subscriptions@marvelsubs.com. ALAN FINE, President & CEO Of Marvel Toys and Marvel Publishing, Inc.; DAVID BOGART, VP Of Publishing Operations; DAN CARR, Executive Director of Publishing Technology; JUSTIN F. GABRIE, Managing Editor; STAN LEE, Chairman Emeritus. For information regarding advertising in Marvel Comics or on Marvel.com, please contact Joe Maimone, Advertising Director, at jmaimone@marvel.com or 212-576-8534. For Marvel subscription inquiries, please call 800-217-9158.

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OH, BROTHER.

YOU'VE ALWAYS LIKED THE SQUISHY, SCARY THINGS, HAVEN'T YOU, JORDY?

WHAT-*EVER*, MOM...

BUT SHE'S RIGHT.

EVER SINCE HE WAS FIVE.

WHENEVER A TELEVISION SHOW ABOUT OCTOPI, SQUID, CUTTLEFISH, OR SOME OTHER MOLLUSK CAME ON P.B.S. OR THE DISCOVERY CHANNEL, JORDAN WOULD SIT AND WATCH, TRANSFIXED, EVERYTHING ELSE FORGOTTEN.

THAT'S JUST HOW GOD MADE JORDAN.

"DON'T YOU 'WHATEVER' ME, KIDDO. AND I **MEAN** IT--GET THE LEAD OUT, GET READY, AND GET DOWNSTAIRS."

SOMETHING ELSE YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT JORDAN HARRISON: HE HAS A **SECRET.**

ONLY ONE OTHER PERSON KNOWS WHAT IT IS:

PETER PARKER.

DUDE-- MOM--ARE YOU BURNING MY EGGS AS PUNISHMENT FOR BEING LATE? 'CAUSE IT SMELLS LIKE...

...MOM? WHAT'S GOING ON, WHAT'S WRONG?

IT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT BUT THEY'RE...THEY'RE REPLAYING IT ON THE NEWS...

WHAT, MOM? REPLAYING *WHAT?*

ON THE TV, HONEY...

...ISN'T THAT YOUR *SCIENCE TEACHER?*

MY NAME IS *PETER PARKER* AND I'VE BEEN *SPIDER-MAN* SINCE I WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OLD.

IT IS JORDAN'S SCIENCE TEACHER.

COMING OUT AS A SUPER HERO TO THE WORLD.

BREAKING NEWS

TO FRIENDS...

MY NAME IS PETER PARKER--

...HIS ENEMIES...

--AND I'VE BEEN SPIDER-MAN--

--SINCE I WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OLD.

WHAT?

EVERYONE.

HOLY--

LANGUAGE, KIDDO.

RRING!! RRING!!

AND YOU MIGHT AS WELL GET THAT; I'M **SURE** IT'S FOR YOU.

IT IS.

IT'S THE PHONE CALL JORDAN'S WAITED FOR HIS ENTIRE LIFE.

IT'S MADELINE DANIELS.

--OH MY GOD, JORDAN, ARE YOU *WATCHING THIS?* I'M, LIKE, *COMPLETELY* DISTURBED. LIKE, MISTER PARKER IS SPIDER-MAN? AND HE'S BEEN, LIKE, *TEACHING US* ALL YEAR? AND, LIKE, NOT *SAYING ANYTHING?*

LIKE, WHAT'S *THAT* ABOUT? (THOUGH, I MEAN, IT *DOES* EXPLAIN THE BRUISES AND FREQUENT ABSENCES; I WAS ALWAYS LIKE: "*WHAT, DOES HIS WIFE ABUSE HIM? IS MR. PARKER IN, LIKE, AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP?*"

IT'S THE MOST MADELINE'S EVER SAID TO JORDAN. WHO'S NOT EVEN LISTENING.

WHO'S REMEMBERING THE TIME **HE** TOLD MR. PARKER **HIS** SECRET.

--YES, JORDAN, WHAT CAN I DO YOU FOR?

...

THE THING IS, MR. PARKER...DON'T TAKE THIS THE WRONG WAY, BUT...

...I KNOW YOU SAID BIOLOGY WASN'T REALLY YOUR AREA OF EXPERTISE, I KNOW THAT'S CHEMISTRY OR WHATEVER, BUT... I'M REALLY COUNTING ON YOU.

ON ME?

THIS CLASS, I MEAN. 'CAUSE I'M WORKING TOWARDS BEING A...YOU KNOW... A *BIOLOGIST.*

YOU ARE?

A *MARINE* BIOLOGIST, YEAH. 'CAUSE I LOVE OCTOPI AND SQUID AND STUFF.

I'VE BEEN TALKING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI (THEY HAVE A GREAT PROGRAM), AND THEY SAID THAT I HAVE TO GET SERIOUS *NOW* IF I WANNA BE ONE.

I SEE...

...AND *YOU* THINK, BECAUSE I'M NOT A BIOLOGIST AT HEART--

--AND MAYBE BECAUSE I HAVE A REPUTATION FOR NOT ALWAYS...*BEING AROUND*--

--YOU THINK I'M NOT GONNA *PUSH YOU* THE WAY YOU NEED TO BE PUSHED.

UHM...

...KIND OF, YEAH.

WELL...TAKE MY WORD FOR IT, JORDAN: I *KNOW* WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE YOUR AGE AND TO FEEL A PASSION FOR SCIENCE. AND ALTHOUGH MY DISSERTATION *WAS* IN RADIOACTIVITY, I'M *MORE* THAN PROFICIENT IN BIOLOGY.

WHENEVER YOU NEED ME, IF YOU WANT TO GET AHEAD, DO EXTRA-CREDIT, ANYTHING LIKE THAT, I'LL *BE THERE*, OKAY?

"AND F.Y.I....

"...*NOBODY* KNOWS OCTOPI THE WAY *I* KNOW OCTOPI."

...FIFTEEN YEARS OLD...

...THE FIRST TIME WE MET, HE WAS A FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD *BOY*...

"--JORDAN? ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME?"

SORRY, YEAH, I WAS JUST...

...OF COURSE I WAS.

OKAY, SO... YOU'LL MEET ME? IN FRONT OF THE MAIN BUILDING?

UHM...

"COME ON, JORDAN. THERE ARE GONNA BE REPORTERS ALL OVER THE SCHOOL 'CAUSE OF THIS."

"PROBABLY, YEAH."

"AND YOU'RE MR. PARKER'S PET, WHICH MEANS THEY'RE GONNA WANNA INTERVIEW YOU."

"UHM...I GUESS."

"AND I'M YOUR LAB PARTNER, RIGHT? WHICH MEANS...IF *YOU'RE* GETTING INTERVIEWED, *I'M* GETTING INTERVIEWED."

"OH. I GET IT NOW."

"FINALLY. *JEEZ.*"

JORDAN DOESN'T BLAME MADELINE. HE KNOWS THAT THIS IS JUST HER WAY OF DEALING WITH... THE UN-DEALABLE.

THAT THEIR SCIENCE TEACHER IS...

DAILY BUGLE

FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

"YOU'RE FIRED!"

...IS...

OH MY GOD. MY SCIENCE TEACHER WAS--

--IS--

--SPIDER-MAN!

AND JORDAN THINKS:

"HOW DID HE FEEL BEFORE HE DID IT? WHERE WAS HE RIGHT BEFORE?"

OKAY, THAT'S... GROSS.

"THROWING UP? NO WAY TO BE SURE, BUT PROB'LY."

"WHO WAS HE WITH? THAT OLD LADY WHOSE PICTURE HE KEEPS ON HIS DESK? OR MAYBE HIS WIFE? ISN'T MR. PARKER MARRIED TO A SUPERMODEL OR SOMETHING? WHO'S ALWAYS CALLING HIM--"

YOU OKAY, TIGER? BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS, YOU KNOW. YOU CAN STILL BACK OUT.

UNFORTUNATELY, HOTSTUFF...

...THAT'S NOT AN OPTION.

(AT LEAST, THIS IS HOW JORDAN IMAGINES THE SCENE PLAYING OUT; NOT FAR FROM THE TRUTH, BUT NOT QUITE IT, EITHER.)

WELL...I'M GONNA BE OUT THERE WITH YOU, OKAY?

HONEY, I TOLD YOU, YOU CAN'T--

NOT LITERALLY, I'LL BE HERE WITH YOUR AUNT, BUT...I'LL ALSO BE OUT THERE WITH YOU, TOO. HOLDING YOUR HAND. TELLING YOU HOW MUCH I LOVE YOU AND HOW PROUD I AM OF YOU.

PETER...

...TIME TO MAKE HISTORY, SON.

"ON THE NEWS, THAT MILLIONAIRE-SLASH-IRON MAN GUY TONY STARK WAS WITH MR. PARKER," JORDAN THINKS, THEN WONDERS: "DID HE PICK HIM UP AT HIS HOUSE, TOO?"

IS THAT WHAT TIME IT IS, TONY? I THOUGHT IT WAS TIME FOR ME TO *LOSE MY LUNCH* AGAIN.

SO THAT'S WHAT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED IN THE RECENT PAST. NOW--

VILLAINS GO WILD

--NOW LET'S TURN TO WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE PRESENT.

WHICH INCLUDES JORDAN THINKING, LIKE THE TEENAGER THAT HE IS, "HOW IS THIS GONNA AFFECT ME?"

HAVE TO CANCEL JORDAN
VENOM'S
BACK IN TOWN

"LIKE, WHAT ABOUT ALL THOSE EXTRA TUTORIALS MR. PARKER AND I WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE?"

"AND WHAT ABOUT APPLYING TO COLLEGES?"

I, UH, SEE HERE THAT ONE OF YOUR LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION WAS WRITTEN BY, UH, SPIDER-MAN? IS THAT RIGHT?

Spider-Man

"NO," JORDAN THINKS, "THIS IS GONNA BE A PROBLEM."

"THIS IS GONNA BE A HUGE, HUGE--"

--AT WHICH POINT, JORDAN IS ALMOST DECAPITATED BY A FLYING MAILBOX.

HOLY--!

BUT THAT'S LIFE IN THE BIG CITY, FOLKS.

WHAT'S...?

AND THEN HE SEES HER.

IF THIS WERE A TEEN MOVIE, MADELINE WOULD BE TURNING SLOW-MOTION. SHE'D BE BATHED IN A CELESTIAL LIGHT. "BITTERSWEET SYMPHONY" WOULD BE PLAYING.

BUT IT'S NOT A TEEN MOVIE. IF ANYTHING--

JORDAN-- THANK GOD!

--IT'S A HORROR MOVIE. A PANIC-IN-THE-STREETS MOVIE.

MADELINE, WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY IS EVERYONE RUNNING?

ONE OF THOSE *SUPER-DWEEBS* IS KICKING MR. PARKER'S *BUTT* RIGHT IN FRONT OF MIDTOWN HIGH!!!

"REALLY? WHO?"

HAVE YOU BEEN LAUGHING AT ME? ALL THIS TIME? ALL THESE YEARS? YOU AND YOUR AUNT??? LAUGHING?!??

PETER-- PARKER??

OTTO-- PLEASE-- CALM--

I'LL THANK YOU NOT TO TELL ME TO CALM DOWN!!

PETER!!!--

--"I'VE BEEN SPIDER-MAN SINCE I WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OLD!!!"--

--PARKER!!

IT'S A SHOCK, OTTO, I KNOW, BUT LET'S TALK ABOUT IT--

--AWAY FROM ALL THESE PEO--

CRACKKK!!!

OHMYGOD! HE'S KILLING MR. PARKER!

HEL-LO, I WAS TELLING YOU!

"MADELINE, WE HAVE TO *DO* SOMETHING!"

"LIKE WHAT? AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN *'WE'?* I DON'T EVEN *LIKE* BIO."

SHOW ME YOUR FACE! I WANT TO SEE YOUR FACE--

--PETER! PARKER!

YOU...

YOU WANNA SEE IT, OTTO? YOU WANNA SEE IT THAT *BAD?*

FINE--

--THERE.

=UHNFF=

HAPPY NOW?

"HAPPY"...?

OTTO OCTAVIUS'S MIND IS **REELING**. THE MEMORY OF A SCENE NOT UNLIKE THIS ONE **RISES** IN HIS CONSCIOUSNESS--AND BLOTS EVERYTHING ELSE OUT.

IT WAS YEARS AGO. (BACK WHEN HE WORE A GREEN JUMPSUIT.)

HE AND SPIDER-MAN WERE FIGHTING, AND HE--FOR ONCE--WAS ACTUALLY WINNING.

THIS IS *IMPOSSIBLE!!* YOU'RE LIKE A HUMAN PUNCHING BAG!! WHAT'S *HAPPENED* TO YOU??

OCTAVIUS SHOULD HAVE BEEN **THRILLED**-- OVERJOYED, IN FACT-- BUT HE WOULDN'T LET HIMSELF **GO THERE.**

HE'S ALMOST UNCONSCIOUS!! I CAN'T *BELIEVE* IT!!

HE DOESN'T EVEN STRUGGLE AS I TRY TO REMOVE HIS MASK! THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE ANSWER...

OTHER PEOPLE WERE PRESENT, AS WELL, THEIR VOICES ECHOING ACROSS THE YEARS:

MR. JAMESON-- *LOOK!* HE'S BEATEN SPIDER-MAN!

SO **QUICKLY!!** HOW? AND--WHERE'S PARKER? HE SHOULD BE *PHOTOGRAPHING* THIS!

IT *IS* DR. OCTOPUS! GOOD THING YOU CALLED US, MISS!

I SHOULD HAVE *KNOWN!!* IT ISN'T SPIDER-MAN! IT'S THAT WEAKLING BRAT, PETER PARKER!

BAH!! TAKE YOUR PUNY HERO! HE'S OF NO INTEREST TO *ME!* IT'S THE *REAL* SPIDER-MAN I'M AFTER!!

AND NOW, YEARS LATER...

...IT ALL COMES *FULL CIRCLE*, DOESN'T IT?

I *HAD* YOU, YOU KNOW. I *HAD* YOU AND I THREW YOU AWAY.

OTTO...WHAT ARE YOU *TALKING* ABOUT?

AND NOW...

IF YOU KILL HIM NOW...

I COULD HAVE KILLED YOU...THAT TIME, WHEN WE WERE JUST STARTING OUT. I COULD'VE *SNAPPED* YOUR NECK...

YEAH, AND YOU KNOW WHAT?

YOU WOULD'VE KILLED A *KID*. NOT SPIDER-MAN, BUT A KID.

THAT'S WHAT YOU WOULD'VE DONE.

JORDAN, ARE YOU CRAZY?

YOU WON'T BE KILLING SPIDER-MAN, YOU'LL BE KILLING... A *GUY.*

SOMEONE WITH A *NAME.* SOMEONE WITH A *FACE.* A *FAMILY.* PEOPLE WHO *LOVE* HIM. *DEPEND* ON HIM.

WE ARE *SO* TOTALLY DEAD...

AND ARE *YOU* ONE OF THOSE PEOPLE?

WHO *"DEPEND"* ON PARKER?

WELL--I MEAN--I *AM* ONE OF HIS STUDENTS, SO...

...HE *IS,* YEAH. WE *BOTH* ARE, ACTUALLY.

AND HE...

...YOU THINK HE ACTUALLY *CARES* FOR YOU?

NOT TO KNOCK THE NEW YORK PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM OR ANYTHING, BUT...

...MORE THAN ANY OTHER TEACHER I'VE EVER HAD, YES.

YEAH, ME, TOO.

AND WHY, PRAY, SHOULD THAT MATTER TO ME? WHY, IN OTHER WORDS, ARE YOU TELLING ME THESE THINGS?

UHM, JUST A GUESS...

...BUT PROBABLY HE WAS *DISTRACTING YOU* TO BUY ME SOME TIME.

WHAT?

KA-HAAAAAAA!

WOW, MR. PARKER'S, LIKE, TOTALLY HARDCORE.

RETHINKING HER STANCE ON SCIENCE NERDS, MADELINE DANIELS WILL BE DATING JORDAN HARRISON BY THE END OF THE WEEK.

OH, OTTO...

WHEN HE REGAINS CONSCIOUSNESS, OTTO OCTAVIUS WILL BE IN A PRISON CELL REED RICHARDS DESIGNED, MUTTERING "FIFTEEN YEARS OLD...FIFTEEN YEARS OLD..." OVER AND OVER AGAIN.

MR. PARKER, IS HE...?

KNOCKED OUT, FOR THE MOMENT.

THAT WAS... GOOD WORK, MR. HARRISON. PRETTY BRAVE FOR A...

...98-POUND WEAKLING?

YEAH, WELL, THIS IS KIND OF MY MAKE-OR-BREAK YEAR, SO I FIGURE YOU SHOULD PROBABLY BE *ALIVE* TO, YOU KNOW, *HELP*. PLUS...

...I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE GIVE MOLLUSKS A BAD NAME.

THE DAY EVERYTHING CHANGES, ONE THING DOESN'T.

IN A YEAR AND A HALF, JORDAN HARRISON WILL BE AWARDED A SCHOLARSHIP TO ATTEND THE UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI.

BECAUSE OF WHAT HE DID TODAY, HIS NICKNAME--AFTER HE GETS HIS PH.D. FOR HIS WORK WITH HUMBOLDT SQUID--WILL BE DR. OCTOPUS.

IT WON'T BE THE GREATEST, BUT JORDAN'LL BE ABLE TO LIVE WITH IT.